

B³ Sub C3
35. (Once Amended) A substrate comprising a super-absorbent material applied to the substrate, wherein the super-absorbent material is obtained by allowing suitable monomers to polymerize in the presence of a catalyst in order to obtain a pre-cross-linked polymer solution, adding a cross-linking agent containing two functional groups which are capable after thermal excitation of reacting within at least ten minutes with carboxylate or carbonic acid functional groups to the polymer solution to obtain a pasty composition, subsequently applying the composition on or in the substrate and allowing the applied composition to dry for one to three minutes at between 150°C and 200°C to form a swellable paste.

36. (Once Amended) A substrate comprising a super-absorbent material applied to the substrate, wherein the material has a significantly enlarged surface area achieved by having the super-absorbent material in the form of a plurality of discrete, substantially semi-spherical islets with a diameter between 10 and 1000 μ .

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39. (Once Amended) The substrate as claimed in claim 35, wherein the pasty composition is applied to the substrate in the form of discrete, substantially semi-spherical islets having a diameter of 10 to 1000 μ and is allowed to dry and cross-link.

40. (Once Amended) The substrate as claimed in claim 39, further comprising adding a foaming agent to the pasty composition prior to applying the composition to the substrate, wherein the composition is caused to foam at any time after addition of the foaming agent.

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41. (Once Amended) The substrate as claimed in claim 40, wherein the pasty composition further comprises at least one other additive chosen from agents for changing the viscosity of the composition, agents for improving the adhesion of the super-absorbent material to the substrate, agents for softening the super-absorbent material, and agents for making the composition conductive.

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45. (Once Amended) The substrate as claimed in claim 35, wherein the cross-linking agent contains two functional groups which are capable after thermal excitation of reacting in a short time with carboxylate or carbonic acid functional groups.

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50. (Once Amended) The substrate as claimed in claim 35, wherein the pasty composition consists of 95-99.9% by weight of an aqueous solution of pre-cross-linked poly(meth)acrylic acid and 0.1-5% by weight of a cross-linking agent.

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62. (Once Amended) A hygiene product selected from the group consisting of a baby napkin, a sanitary towel, and an incontinence product, comprising the substrate as claimed in claim 35.

REMARKS

Claims 35, 36, 38-50, and 61-64 are pending in this application. In view of the claim amendments made hereto, and for the reasons advanced below, the pending claims are believed to be in condition for allowance, and reexamination and allowance of this patent application are thus respectfully solicited.

Claim 35 has been amended in such a way as to obviate any lack of antecedent basis in claim 46. Proper Markush language has been added to claim 62. Reconsideration of the